

Gotcha!



Always Wear PPE During Flight Ops

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It was a beautiful sunny day in the Arabian Gulf, although seas were a bit choppy. On board USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower* flight ops had just begun. I spotted him as I scanned the flight deck for the usual discrepancies, such as FOD and individuals not wearing proper flight-deck gear.

He was a shipmate working on an aft, starboard radar platform. He was not wearing even the basic cranial or float coat and was perched on a ladder, washing a radar-feedhorn cover.

Meanwhile, jets on the fantail were turning their engines and preparing to get into position for launch. During all this flight-deck activity, the Sailor was calmly going about his work, oblivious to his dangerous surroundings. Flight-deck crewmembers tried to get his attention to tell him to get inside the skin of the ship, but to no avail.

Finally, the ship's safety officer was able to get him to move to a safe position where jet exhaust wouldn't blow the Sailor overboard.

This fellow was lucky. Nevertheless, why would anyone take chances with his health or life? Our unsuspecting Sailor should have realized a float coat would have given him some protection had he fallen overboard. He would also have worn hearing protection.

More importantly, he should have worked on the radar during a lull in flight ops, not while they were in progress.

Had he thought of ORM, he would not have put himself at risk. ☹️

The author submitted this article while assigned to VF-143, embarked in USS Dwight D. Eisenhower.